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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JEDDAH 000576

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RIYADH, PLEASE PASS TO DHAHRAN; DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ARP;
PARIS FOR WALLER; LONDON FOR TSOU

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SUBJECT: MOSQUE SERMONS FOR SAUDI ARABIA AUGUST 25: MECCA
IMAM ADVISES CONGREGATION TO PREPARE FOR DOOMSDAY; IN
MEDINA, MUSLIMS ARE ADVISED TO END THEIR LIVES WITH
RIGHTEOUS DEEDS

Classified By: Consul General Tatiana Gfoeller, for
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

FROM MECCA: IMAM SAYS THE HEAT OF SUMMER SHOULD REMIND
FAITHFUL OF THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

11. (U) At the Grand Mosque in Mecca, Imam Sheikh Salah bin Mohammed Aal Talib lectured the worshipers on preparations for Doomsday. Fortunately, in contrast to recent sermons, today's sermon related to the theological Day of Judgment rather than to Islam's conflicts with the "other." The imam told the congregation that the "heat of summer should remind people of Doomsday." He quoted Islamic tradition that "on Doomsday, the sun is one mile away from the resurrected people. On that day, there will be no tree to provide shade, no water to give some relief and no rock besides which to take rest. The land will be flat." Then, related Talib, "amidst this suffering there will be some among the believers whom Allah will provide with shade on the Day when there will be no shade except that provided by Him."

THE SEVEN CATEGORIES OF PEOPLE WHOM ALLAH WILL PROVIDE WITH SHADE

12. (C) The imam provided a list of the several categories of the faithful who will have obtained God's special favor. They are: 1. A just leader. 2. A youth who grows up in the worship of Allah. 3. A person whose heart is attached to the mosque. 4. Two people who like each other for the sake of Allah. 5. A man, who, when called by a beautiful woman of high social standing (for immoral acts), says, "I fear Allah." COMMENT: One wonders how this act of abnegation can be reconciled with the Muslim vision of a Heaven populated by houris who entertain the male faithful. Can it be an issue of who is the aggressor? END COMMENT. 6. One who gives alms and does not disclose it to anyone. 7. One who remembered Allah privately and tears flowed from his eyes.

IMAM ASKS GOD TO HUMBLE NON-BELIEVERS

13. (U) After this lesson in eschatology, the imam concluded his sermon with the usual prayer for "God to support Islam and Muslims, humble non-belief and unbelievers.... (A)id whoever aides religion, humble the tyrants, atheists, and corrupt...make this and all Muslim countries safe and secure." And finally, "O God, whoever wishes us and Muslims

and their lands evil, busy him with himself and turn his plot against him."

FROM MEDINA: EXHORTATION TO PERFORM RIGHTEOUS DEEDS AND SEEK A GOOD END

¶4. (U) In another non-political sermon, Imam Shaykh Ali bin Abd al-Rahman al-Hudhayfi urged the congregation at the Prophet's Mosque in Medina to perform good deeds and seek a good end to their lives. He told the worshipers "deeds are driven by intention and what a person gets depends upon his intention. Allah commands a Muslim to do good deeds and keep away from committing sins and all that He has forbidden at all times."

FAITHFUL ARE JUDGED BY THEIR FINAL DEEDS

¶5. (U) The imam then related "there is emphasis on doing good deeds when a person becomes old, especially when approaching the last days of life." He thereupon quoted the Prophet "The deeds are judged by the final deeds." The imam then explained: "Whoever Allah grants success to do good deeds in the final days or hours of his life, then Allah has written a good end for him." He also warned: "Whoever Allah does not grant success and he does an evil deed in his final hour Allah's wrath will be brought against him." Finally, al-Hudhayfi reiterated that "Allah has commanded Muslims to seek a good end. Whoever succeeds in having a good end, he will be happy in the Hereafter, but whoever does an evil deed in the last hours of life, he is at a loss in this world and in the Hereafter."

¶6. (C) COMMENT: Unfortunately, this doctrine provides a fundamental religious justification for the extremist whose

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final actions are likely to result in his death in "defense of Islam." On the other hand, condemnation by religious authorities of terrorist acts as evil and damning the perpetrator, would undermine the theological basis for committing such acts. END COMMENT.

RIGHTEOUS ACTS THAT WILL SECURE A GOOD END

¶7. (C) The imam described types of behavior that would constitute a good end for Muslims. Performing the five obligatory prayers in congregation is one good deed. Others include: belief, being God-conscious in private and in public, obeying Allah and keeping away from forbidden things, following the teachings of the Prophet, not being unjust to others, and refraining from innovations in religion. COMMENT: The admonition against innovation serves to exclude heterodox religious activities, such as Sufism, and strengthen the hand of the conservative religious establishment. END COMMENT.

¶8. No report was received from the Eastern Province this week.
Gfoeller